South La Crosse Transportation Study

US 14/61 & WIS 35

Green Bay Street to US 14/61/WIS 35 Intersection

US 14/61 to County M

WIS 35 to Vernon/La Crosse County Line

ID 1644-08-00

September 2005

SEH

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Study Report

South La Crosse Transportation Study

La Crosse County, WI

SEH No. A-WIDOT0405.00

September 26, 2005

Executive Summary

The South La Crosse Transportation Study was the result of a cooperative effort between the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), La Crosse Area Planning Committee (LAPC), City of La Crosse, and the Town of Shelby. The intent of the study was to identify a common long-term vision for the future of South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road. In addition, timing of improvements and programming options for WIS 35 South and US 14/61 were also included in the study.

The South La Crosse Transportation Study includes three highway segments located within the study area:

- Segment A (Urban Segment) – Located in the City of La Crosse and portions of the Town of Shelby on South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road (US 14/61/WIS 35) between Green Bay Street and the US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection.
- Segment B (Rural Segment) – Located on WIS 35 between the US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection and the La Crosse/Vernon County Line (near Goose Island County Park).
- Segment C (Rural Segment) – Located on US 14/61 between the US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection and County M (near Ten Mile Hill).

The study limits extend approximately 0.5 miles from the roadway centerline for a total study area width of one mile.

This study was undertaken to address a number of interrelated issues that have the potential to adversely affect the US 14/61/WIS 35 corridor in the future. The need to develop a long-term vision for the urban segment, and identify programmatic and timing for the rural segments stem from:

- Increasing Traffic Congestion
- Safety Concerns
- Facility Deficiencies
- Insufficient Multi-modal Accommodations
- Changing Land Use/Transportation Needs

A range of alternatives for the urban segment were developed that provide a long-term vision and address the needs listed above. The mainline alternatives include a Four-lane Variable Width Median, Five-lane Two-Way-Left-Turn-Lane, Hybrid Alternative, and the No-build Alternative. Major intersections with public streets were evaluated and three potential intersection options developed including a signalized intersection, two-lane roundabout, and three-lane roundabout. The potential intersection options would be contained within the mainline alternatives. It was not within the scope of this study to determine a preferred alternative. A National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental process would need to be initiated at a later time to identify a preferred alternative and determine in greater detail environmental effects.

In addition to mainline alternatives for the urban segment of the corridor, six intersection alternatives for the US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection were developed. These alternatives were developed as a system of intersections including 33rd Street, Old Town Hall Road, Riverview Drive, and Sunnyside Drive. Though each of the intersection alternatives would provide good operations at the US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection, other intersections function differently depending upon the intersection alternative.

Segment B is currently under reevaluation for construction as a four-lane facility and is tentatively scheduled for construction in 2010. Current forecast information indicates that WIS 35 South would exceed the threshold for a two-lane facility at or near 2023.

Currently, a plan exists for Segment C. Traffic volumes were analyzed and traffic forecasts examined for the determination of when construction of a four-lane facility would be needed in the future. Based on existing information, it is likely that a four-lane facility along US 14/61 would not be needed until sometime after 2030.

Other strategies and recommendations included in the study include access management, multi-modal accommodations, and urban design and aesthetic treatments.